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A  
True COPY  
Of a  
LETTER  
Written by  
N. Machiavill,  
IN  
DEFENCE of Himself,  
And His  
RELIGION.

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*Translated from an Original Copy.*

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L O N D O N,  
Printed for R. Bentley in Covent-Garden, 1691.



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AN  
ADVERTISEMENT.  
TO THE  
READER,  
Concerning this LETTER.

Courteous Reader,

**I***T hath been usual with almost all those who have Translated this Author into any Language, to spend much of their time and Paper in Taxing his Impieties, and Confuting his Errours, and false Principles, as they are pleased to call them: If upon perusal of his Writings I had found him guilty of any thing that could deceive the Simple, or prejudice the rest of Mankind, I should not have put thee to the hazard of reading him in thy own Language, but rather have suffered him still to sleep in the obscurity of his own, than endanger the World; but being very well assured of the contrary, and that this Age will rather receive advantage than damage by this Publication, I did yet think that it was fit to say something in a Preface to vindicate our Author from those Slanders which Priests, and other byast Pens have laid upon him. But still I thought that it might prove a bold and presumptuous Undertaking, and might excite Laughter, for a Person of my*

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*small Parts and Abilities, to Apologise for one of the greatest Wits, and profoundest Judgments that ever liv'd amongst the Moderns. In this perplexity, I had the good fortune to meet with this Letter of his own writing, which hath deliver'd me from those scruples, and furnished me with an opportunity of justifying this great Person by his own Pen. Receive then this choice Piece with benignity, it hath never before been Published in any Language, but lurkt for above 80 years in the private Cabinets of his own Kindred, and the descendants of his own Admirers in Florence; 'till in the beginning of the Pontificat of Urbane the VIIIth, it was procured by the Jesuits, and other Busybodies, and brought to Rome, with an intention to divert that wise Pope from his design of making one of Nicholas Machiavill's Name and Family Cardinal, as (notwithstanding all their opposition) he did not long after. When it was gotten into that City, it wanted not those who had the judgment and curiosity to copy it, and so at length came to enjoy that priviledge which all rare Pieces (even the sharpest Libels and Pasquils) challenge in that Court, which is to be sold to Strangers: One of which being a Gentleman of this Countrey, brought it over with him at his return from Florence, in the year 1645. and having Translated it into English, did communicate it to divers of his Friends, and by means of some of them, it hath been my good fortune to be capable of making thee a Present of it; and let it serve as an Apology for our Author, and his Writings, if thou thinkest he need any. I must confess, I believe his Works require little, but rather praise, and admiration; yet I wish I could as well justify one undertaking of his not long after the writing of this Letter; for we find, in the story of those times, that in the Month of August following, in the same Year 1537 this Nicòlo Machiavelli (except there were another of that Name) was committed Prisoner to the Bargello, amongst those who were taken in Arms against Cosimo, at the Castle of Montemurli; notwithstanding all his Compliments in this Letter to that*



that Prince, and profess Allegiance to him. If this be so, we must impute it to his too great Zeal to concur with the desires of the Universality at that time, in restoring the Liberty of their Country, which hath so far dazl'd the Judgments even of Great and Wise Men, that thou seest many Grave Authors amongst the Antients have even commended, and deify'd the ingratitude and treachery of Brutus and Cassius. But certainly this Crime of his would have been much more unpardonable, if he had liv'd to see his own Prophecy fulfill'd in the Persons and Descendents of this Great Cosimo; for there was never any Succession of Princes since the World began, in which all the Royal Vertues, and other Qualities necessary to those who Rule over Men, were more eminently perspicuous, than in every individual of this Line; so that those People have as little cause as ever any had, to lament the Change of their Government, their great Dukes having been truly Fathers of their Country, and treated their Subjects like Children, though their Power be above all limitation, above all fundamental Laws; but they having no Law, are a Law to themselves. I cannot chuse but instance in some few of their benefits to their People; First the making the River Arno Navigable from Pisa to Florence in a Tear of dearth, that so the Poor might be set on work, and have bread; and the Traffick of both Cities infinitely facilitated: Their making at their own charge a Canal from Lucerne to Pisa; their erecting at Pisa a Famous University, paying the Professors, who are Eminent for Learning, and discharging all other incidences out of their own Revenue; besides the raising State/y Buildings for Schools, and Libraries; their fondering a Renowned Order of Knighthood, and keeping the Chapter in the same City, and ordering a considerable number of Knights constantly to reside there; both which were intended and performed by them, to increase the Concourse, and restore the Wealth to the once oppulent Inhabitants of that place. Their New Building, Fortifying, and Infranchising Lucerne, that even by abolishing their own Customs, they might enrich their Subjects, and make that Port (as it now is) the Magazine of all the Le-

*vant Trade: And lastly, their not having in 140 years ever lev'd any new Tax upon their People, except in the year 1642 to defend the Liberties of Italy against the Barbarians. These things would merit a Panegyrick, if either my parts, or this short Advertisement would admit it; I shall conclude then, after I have born a just and dutiful Testimony to the Merits of the Prince who now Governs that State, in whom (if all the Princely Vertues and Endowments should be lost) they might be found and restor'd again to the World: As some ingenious Artists in the last Age, retriev'd the Art of Sculpture by certain bas relievo's remaining on some Pillars, and Walls at Rome. The Prudence, Magnanimity, Charity, Liberality, and above all, the Humanity, Courtesie and Affability of this Prince, though exceeding expressions, yet they are sufficiently known, not only to his own Subjects (the constant Objects of his Care and Goodness) but even to all Strangers, more particularly to our Nation; he having undertaken a troublesome Journey to visit this Kingdom, and to make it witness and partake of his transcendent Generosity and Bounty, which he hath continued ever since, as can be testified by all who have had the honour to wait upon him in his own Country, or the good fortune but to see him in ours. I myself, who have been so happy to be admitted into his presence, and have been honoured since, in having his Highness my Customer for many choice Books, to increase (not his knowledge, for that is beyond receiving any addition by Books) but his Curiosity and his Library; do think myself bound in duty to take this poor opportunity of testifying my gratitude and devotion to this Excellent Prince. As to this Letter I have nothing more to say, but that thou mayest see how right this Author was set in Principles of Religion, before he could have the information which we have had since from the Pens of most Learned and rational Controversists in those Points; and therefore thou mayest admire the Sagacity of his Judgment. Read him then, and serve God, thy Country, and thy King, with the knowledge he will teach thee. Farewell.*

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## True Copy of a LETTER

Written

By *N. Machiavill, &c.*

THE Discourse we had lately (dear *Messieur Zenobio*) in the Delightful Gardens of our old deceased Friend *Rucellai Cosimo*, and the pressing importunity of *Messieur Giulio Salivati*, that I would use some means to wipe off the many aspersions cast upon my Writings, gives you the present trouble of reading this Letter, and me the pleasure of writing it: which last would be infinitely greater, if I were not at this day too Old, and too Inconsiderable, and by the Change of our Government, wholly incapable of performing either with my Brain or my Hand any further Service to my Country. For it hath ever been my Opinion, that whosoever goes about to make Men publickly acquainted with his Actions, or Apologise to the World for imputations laid upon him, cannot be excused from vanity, and impertinence, except his Parts and Opportunities be such as may enable him to be instrumental for the good of others: And that he cannot atchieve that excellent end, without justifying himself from having any indirect and base ones, and procuring trust from Men, by clearing the Repute of his Justice and Integrity to them. But although this be far from my Case, yet I have yielded  
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(you see) to the intreaty of *Messieur Giulio*, and the rest of that Company, not only because I am sufficiently (both by the restraint of our Press, and the discretion of the Person I write to) assured that this Letter will never be made publick; but for that I esteem it a duty to clear that excellent Society from the scandal of having so dangerous and pernicious a Person to be a member of their Conversation; for by reason of my Age, and since the loss of our Liberty, and my Sufferings under that Monster of Lust and Cruelty *Alexander de Medici*, set over us by the Divine Vengeance for our Sins, I can be capable of no other design or enjoyment, than to delight, and be delighted, in the Company of so many Choice and Virtuous Persons, who now assemble themselves with all security under the happy & hopeful Reign of our new Prince *Cosimo*; and we may say, that though our Commonwealth be not restored, our Slavery is at an end; and that he coming in by our own choice, may prove (if I have as good Skill in Prophecy as I have had formerly) Ancestor to many Renowned Princes, who will govern this State in great quietness, and with great Clemency; so that our Posterity is like to enjoy ease and security, though not that Greatness, Wealth and Glory, by which our City hath for some years past (even in the most factious and tumultuous times of our Democracy) given Law to *Italy*, and bridled the ambition of Foreign Princes. But, that I may avoid the *loquacity* incident to Old Men, I will come to the business. If I remember well, the Exceptions that are taken to those poor things I have publisht, are reducible to three; first, That in all my Writings I insinuate my great affection to the Democratical Government, even so much as to undervalue that of Monarchy in respect of it; which last I do, not obscurely, in many passages, teach, and as it were perswade the People to throw off. Next, That in some places I vent very great impieties, slighting and vilifying the Church, as Author of all the Misgovernment in the

the World, and by such contempt make way for Atheism and Profaneness; and lastly, that in my Book of the Prince I teach Monarchs all the execrable Villanies that can be invented, and instruct them how to break Faith, and so to Oppress and Enslave their Subjects. I shall answer something to every one of these; and that I may observe a right method, will begin with the first. Having lived in an Age when our poor Country and Government have suffered more Changes and Revolutions than ever did perhaps befall any People in so short a time; and having had, till the taking of *Florence*, my share in the managing of Affairs, during almost all these Alterations, sometimes in the Quality of Secretary of our City, and sometimes employ'd in Embassages abroad; I set my self to read the Histories of Antient and Modern Times, that I might by that means find out whether there had not been in all Ages the like Vicissitudes and Accidents in State Affairs, and to search out the Causes of them; and having in some sort satisfied my self therein, I could not abstain from scribbling something of the two chief kinds of Government, Monarchy, and Democracy, of which all other forms are but mixtures: And since neither my Parts nor Learning could arrive to follow the steps of the Ancients, by writing according to Method and Art, as *Plato*, *Aristotle*, and many others have done upon this Subject; I did content my self to make slight Observations upon both, by giving a bare Character of a Modern Prince, as to the Monarchical frame, and as to the popular chusing the perfectest and most successful of all Governments of that kind upon Earth; and in my Discourses upon it, following the Order of my Author, without ever taking upon me to argue problematically, much less to decide which of these two Governments is the best: If from my way of handling matters in my Discourses upon *Livy*, and from those incomparable Vertues and great Actions we read of in that History, and from the Observations I make, Men will conclude (which is I must confess my Opinion) that the excellency of those Counsels and Atchievements, and the

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improvement which Mankind, and as I may so say, Humane Nature it self obtained amongst the *Romans*, did proceed naturally from their Government, and was but a plain effect and consequence of the perfection of their Commonwealth; I say, if Readers will thus judge, how can I in reason be accus'd for that? It would become those who lay this blame upon me, to undeceive them whom my Papers have misled, and to shew the World to what other Cause we may impute those admirable Effects, those Heroick Qualities and Performances, that Integrity, and purity of Manners, that scorning of Riches and Life it self, when the Publick was concerned: if they please to do this, they will oblige my Readers, who will owe to such the rectifying of their Judgments, and not at all offend me, who have reason'd this matter impartially, and without passion, nor have positively affirmed any thing. But what if this part of my Accusation had been true? why should I be condemned of Heresy or Indiscretion for preferring a Commonwealth before a Monarchy? Was I not born, bred, and employ'd in a City, which being, at the time I writ, under that Form of Government, did owe all Wealth and Greatness, and all prosperity to it? If I had not very designedly avoided all dogmaticalness in my Observations, (being not willing to imitate young Scholars in their declamations) I might easily have concluded from the Premises I lay down, that a Democracy founded upon good Orders, is the best and most excellent Government, and this without the least fear of confutation; for I firmly believe, that there are none but Flatterers and Sophisters would oppose me, such as will wrest *Aristotle*, and even *Plato* himself, to make them write for Monarchy, by misapplying some loose passages in those great Authors; nay, they will tell their Readers, that what is most like the Government of the World by God, is the best, which wholly depends upon his Absolute Power. To make this Comparison run with four feet, these Sycophants must give the poor Prince they intend to Deify, a better and superiour Nature to Humanity,

nity, must create a necessary dependance of all creatures upon him, must endow him with infinite Wisdom and Goodness, and even with Omnipotency it self. It will be hard for any man to be misled in this Argument, by Proofs wrested from Theology, since whosoever reads attentively the Historical part of the Old Testament, shall find that God himself never made but one Government for Men, that this Government was a Commonwealth (wherein the Sanhedrim or Senate, and the Congregation, or popular Assembly had their share) and that he manifested his high displeasure when the rebellious People would turn it into a Monarchy. But, that I may not strike upon the Rock I profess to shun, I shall pass to that which is, indeed, fit to be wipt off, and which, if it were true, would not only justly expose me to the hatred and vengeance of God, and all good Men, but even destroy the design and purpose of all my Writings; which is to treat in some sort (as well as one of my small parts can hope to do) of the Politicks; and how can any man pretend to write concerning policy, who destroys the most essential part of it, which is Obedience to all Governments? It will be very easie then for *Giulio Salivati*, or any other Member of our Society, to believe the protestation I make; that the animating of private Men, either directly or indirectly, to disobey, much less to shake off any Government, how despotical soever, was never in my thoughts or Writings; those who are unwilling to give credit to this, may take the pains to assign in any of my Books the passages they imagine to tend that way (for I can think of none my self) that so I may give such person more particular satisfaction. I must confess I have a Discourse in one of my Books, to encourage the *Italian Nation* to assume their antient valour, and to expel the *Barbarians*, meaning (as the Antient *Romans* us'd the word) all Strangers from amongst us; but that was before the Kings of *Spain* had quiet possession of the Kingdom of *Naples*, or the Emperour of the *Dutchy of Milan*; so that I could not be interpreted to mean, that the People of those two

Dominions should be stirr'd up to shake off their Princes, because they were Foreigners, since at that time *Lodovic Sforza* was in possession of the one, and King *Frederick* restored to the other, both Natives of *Italy*; but my design was to exhort our Countrymen not to suffer this Province to be the Scene of the Arms and Ambition of *Charles* the VIII<sup>th</sup>, or K. *Lewis* his Successor; who, when they had a mind to renew the old Title of the House of *Anjou* to the Kingdom of *Naples*, came with such Force into *Italy*, that not only our Goods were plundered, and our Lands wasted, but even the Liberty of our Cities and Governments endanger'd; but to unite and oppose them, and to keep this Province in the hands of Princes of our own Nation; this my intention is so visible in the Chapter it self, that I need but refer you to it. Yet, that I may not answer this imputation barely by denying, I shall assert in this place what my Principles are in that which the World calls Rebellion; which I believe to be not only a rising in Arms against any Government we live under, but do acknowledge that word to extend to all Clandestine Conspiracies too, by which the peace and quiet of any Country may be interrupted, and by consequence the Lives and Estates of innocent Persons endanger'd. Rebellion then, so described, I hold to be the greatest Crime that can be committed amongst Men, both against Policy, Morality, and in *Foro Conscientiæ*: But notwithstanding all this, it is an Offence which will be committed whilst the World lasts, as often as Princes tyrannize, and, by Inslaving and Oppressing their Subjects, make Magistracy, which was intended for the Benefit of Mankind, prove a Plague and destruction to it: For let the terrour and the guilt be never so great, it is impossible that Humane Nature, which consists of Passion as well as Vertue, can support with patience and submission the greatest Cruelty and Injustice, whenever either the Weakness of their Princes, the Unanimity of the People, or any other favourable accident, shall give them reasonable hopes to mend their Condition, and provide better for their own



own interest by Insurrection: So that Princes and States ought, in the conduct of their Affairs, not only to consider what their People are bound to submit to, if they were inspir'd from Heaven; or were all Moral Philosophers; but to weigh likewise what is probable *de facto* to fall out, in this corrupt Age of the World, and to reflect upon those dangerous tumults which have happen'd frequently, not only upon Oppression, but even by reason of malversation; and how some Monarchies have been wholly subverted, and changed into Democracies, by the Tyranny of their Princes, as we see (to say nothing of *Rome*) the powerful Cantons of *Switzerland* brought by that means, a little before the last Age, to a considerable Commonwealth, courted and sought to by all the Potentates in *Christendom*. If Princes will seriously consider this matter, I make no question but they will Rule with Clemency and Moderation, and return to that excellent Maxime of the Antients (almost exploded in this Age) that the Interest of Kings, and of their People, is the same, which Truth it hath been the whole Design of my Writings to convince them of.

Now having gone thus far in the description of Rebellion; I think my self obliged to tell you what I conceive not to be Rebellion. Whosoever then takes up Arms to maintain the Politick Constitution, or Government of his Country, in the Condition it then is, I mean, to defend it from being Changed, or Invaded, by the Craft or Force of any Man (although it be the Prince, or Chief Magistrate himself) provided, that such taking up of Arms be Commanded, or Authorised by those who are, by the Orders of that Government, legally intrusted with the Custody of the Liberty of the People, and Foundation of the Government: This I hold to be so far from Rebellion, that I believe it laudable, nay, the Duty of every Member of such Commonwealth; for that he who Fights to Support and Defend the Government he was born and lives under, cannot deserve the odious name of Rebel, but he who endeavours to destroy it. If this be not granted,

granted, it will be in vain to frame any mixt Monarchies in the World; yet such is at this day the happy Form under which almost all *Europe* lives, as the People of *France*, *Spain*, *Germany*, *Poland*, *Swethland*, *Denmark*, &c. Wherein the Prince hath his share, and the People theirs; which last, if they had no means of recovering their Rights, if taken from them, or defending them if invaded, would be in the same Estate as if they had no Title to them, but liv'd under the Empire of *Turkey*, or of *Muscovey*. And since they have no other Remedy but by Arms, and that it would be of ill Conquence to make every private man judge when the Rights of the People (to which they have as lawful a Claim as the Prince to his) are Invaded, which would be apt to produce frequent, and sometimes causeless Tumults; therefore it hath been the great Wisdom of the Founders of such Monarchies, to appoint Guardians to their Liberty; which if it be not otherwise exprest, is and ought to be understood to reside in the Estates of the Country, which for that Reason (as also to exercise their share in the Sovereignty, as making Laws, Levying Money, &c.) are frequently to be Assembled in all those Regions in *Europe*, before mentioned. These are to assert and maintain the Orders of the Government, and the Laws established, and (if it cannot be done otherwise) to arm the People to defend them, and repel the force that is upon them. Nay, the Government of *Aragon* goes further; and because in the intervals of the Estates or Courts many accidents may intervene, to the prejudice of their Rights, or *Fueros*, as they call them; they have, during the intermission, appointed a Magistrate, called *El Justicia*, who is, by the Law and Constitution of that Kingdom, to Assemble the whole People to his Banner, whenever such Rights are incroacht upon; who are not only justified by the Laws for such coming together, but are severely punishable in case of refusal. So that there is no question, but that if the Kings of *Aragon*, at this day very powerful, by the addition of the *Naples* Kingdom, and of *Sicily*,

*Sicily*, and the Union with *Castile*, should, in time to come, Invade their Kingdom of *Aragon* with the Forces of their New Dominions, and endeavour to take from them the Rights and Priviledges they enjoy lawfully by their Constitution, There is no question, I say, but they may (though their King be there in person against them) Assemble under their *Justicia*, and defend their Liberties, with as much Justice, as if they were Invaded by the *French*, or by the *Turk*. For it were absurd to think, since the People may be legally assembled to apprehend Banditti Robbers, nay, to deliver a Possession forceably detain'd against the Sentence of some inferiour Court, that they may and ought not to bestir themselves to keep in being, and preserve that Government which maintains them in possession of their Liberty, and Property, and defends their Lives too, from being Arbitrarily taken away. But I know this clear Truth receives opposition in this unreasonable and corrupt Age; when Men are more prone to Flatter the Lusts of Princes than formerly, and the Favourites are more impatient to bear the impartiality of Laws, than the Sons of *Brutus* were; who complain'd, *Leges esse Surdas*; that is, though they were fine Gentlemen, in favour with the Ladies, and Ministers of the King's Pleasures, yet they could not Oppress, Drink, Whore, nor Kill the, *Sbiri*, Officers of Justice, in the Streets, returning from their Night Revels, but the Execution of the Laws would reach them, as well as others; who, in the times of *Tarquin* it seems, found the Prince more exorable. Nay, the very Divines themselves help with their fallacies to oppugne this Doctrine; by making us believe, as I said before, that it is God's will all Princes should be absolute; and are so far in a Conspiracy against Mankind, that they assert that in the Text (*This shall the manner of your King be*) God was giving that People the *Jus Divinum* of Government, when in truth he was threatning them with the Plagues of Monarchy. But I spare the Divines here, since I shall have occasion, in Discourfing of my next Acculation, to shew how that

that sort of People have dealt with God's Truths, and with the Interests of Men; and to be as good as my word, I shall presently fall upon that Point, having been so tedious already in the former.

I am charged then in the Second place with Impiety, in villifying the Church, and so to make way for Atheism. I do not deny but that I have very frequently, in my Writings, laid the blame upon the Church of *Rome*; not only for all the Misgovernment of Christendom, but even for the depravation, and almost total Destruction of Christian Religion it self in this Province. But that this Discourse of mine doth, or can tend to teach Men Impiety, or to make way for Atheism, I peremptorily deny; and although for proof of my innocence herein, I need but refer you, and all others, to my Papers themselves, as they are now Published; (where you will find all my Reasons drawn from Experience, and frequent Examples cited, which is ever my way of arguing) yet since I am put upon it, I shall in a few Lines make that matter possibly a little clearer; and shall first make protestation, that as I do undoubtedly hope, by the Merits of Christ, and by Faith in him, to attain Eternal Salvation; so I do firmly Believe the Christian Profession to be the only true Religion now in the World: Next, I am fully perswaded that all Divine Verities, which God then designed to teach the World, are contained in the Books of Holy Scripture, as they are now extant, and received amongst us. From them I understand, that God Created Man in Purity, and Innocence; and that the first of that Species, by their frailty, lost at once their Integrity, and their Paradise, and intail'd Sin and Misery upon their Posterity. That Almighty God, to repair this loss, did, out of his infinite Mercy, and with unparallel'd Grace and Goodness, send his only Begotten Son into the World, to teach us new Truths, to be a perfect Example of Vertue, Goodness, and Obedience; to restore true Religion, degenerated amongst the *Jews* into Superstition, Formality, and Hypocrisy;

pocrisie; to die for the Salvation of Mankind, and in fine, to give to us the Holy Spirit, and to regenerate our Hearts, support our Faith, and lead us into all Truth. Now if it shall appear, that as the lusts of our first Parents did at that time disappoint the good intention of God, in making a pure World, and brought in, by their disobedience, the Corruptions that are now in it; so, that since likewise the Bishops of *Rome*, by their insatiable Ambition and Avarice, have designedly, as much as in them lies, frustrated the merciful purpose he had in the happy restoration he intended the World by his Son, and in the renewing and reforming of Humane Nature, and have wholly defac'd and spoil'd Christian Religion, and made it a Worldly and a Heathenish thing, and altogether incapable, as it is practis'd amongst them, either of directing the ways of its Professors to Vertue and good Life, or of saving their Souls hereafter. If, I say, this do appear, I know no reason why I, for detecting thus much, and for giving warning to the World to take heed of their ways, should be accused of Impiety, or Atheism, or why his Holiness should be so enraged against the poor Inhabitants of the Vallies in *Savoy*, and against the *Albigesi*, for calling him Antichrist. But to find that this is an undoubted Truth, I mean, that the Popes have corrupted Christian Religion, we need but read the New Testament (acknowledged by themselves to be of Infallible Truth) and there we shall see, that the Faith and Religion Preacht by Christ, and settled afterwards by his Apostles, and Cultivated by their Sacred Epistles, is so different a thing from the Christianity that is now Profess'd, and Taught at *Rome*, that we should be convinc'd, that if those Holy Men should be sent by God again into the World, they would take more pains to confute this Gallimaufry, than ever they did to preach down the Traditions of the *Pharisees*, or the Fables and Idolatries of the *Gentiles*, and would in probability suffer a new Martyrdom in that City, under the Vicar of Christ, for the same Doctrine which once animated the Heathen Tyrants against them.



them. Nay, we have something more to say against these Sacrilegious Pretenders to God's Power; for whereas all other false Worships have been set up by some Politick Legislators, for the Support and Preservation of Government, this false, this spurious Religion, brought in upon the ruines of Christianity by the Popes, has deform'd the face of Government in *Europe*, destroying all the good Principles and Morality left us by the Heathens themselves; and introduced instead thereof, Sordid, Cowardly, and Impolitick Notions; whereby they have subjected Mankind, and even great Princes and States to their own Empire, and never suffer'd any Orders or Maxims to take place, where they have power, that might make a Nation Wise, Honest, Great, or Wealthy. This I have set down so plainly in those Passages of my Book which are complain'd of, that I shall say nothing at all for the Proof of it in this place, but refer you thither, and come to speak a little more particularly of my first assertion; That the Pope and his Clergy have depraved Christian Religion. Upon this Subject, I could infinitely wish, now Letters begin to revive again, that some Learned Pen would employ it self, and that some Person vers'd in the Cronology of the Church (as they call it) would deduce out of the Ecclesiastical Writers the time and manner how these Abuses crept in, and by what Arts and Steps this *Babel* that reaches at Heaven, was built by these Sons of the Earth: But this matter, as unsuitable to the brevity of a Letter, and indeed more to my small Parts and Learning, I shall not pretend to, being one who never hitherto studied or writ of Theology, further than it did naturally concern the Politicks; therefore I shall only deal by the New Testament, as I have done formerly by *Titus Livius*, that is, make Observations or Reflections upon it, and leave you *Messieur Giulio*, and the rest of our Society, to make the judgment, not citing like Preachers the Chapter, or Verse, because the reading of Holy Scripture is little us'd, and indeed hardly permitted amongst us. To begin at the top, I would have  
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any reasonable Man tell me whence this unmeasurable Power, long claim'd, and now possess'd by the Bishop of *Rome*, is deriv'd; first, of being Christ's Vicar, and by that (as I may so say) pretending to a Monopoly of the Holy Spirit, (which was promis'd and given to the whole Church, that is, to the Elect, or Saints) as is plain by a Clause in *St. Peter's* Sermon, made the very same time that the miraculous Gifts of the Spirit of God were first given to the Apostles, who says to the *Jews and Gentiles*, *Repent, and be Baptised every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ, for the Remission of Sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost; for this Promise is to you, and to your Children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call.* Next, to judge infallibly of Divine Truth, and to forgive Sins as Christ did: Then to be the Head of all Ecclesiastical Persons, and Causes in the World; to be so far above Kings and Princes, as to Judge, Depose, and Deprive them, and to have an absolute Jurisdiction over all the Affairs in *Christendom*, in *Ordine ad Spiritualia*; yet all this the Canonists allow him, and he makes no scruple to assume, whilst it is plain, that in the whole New Testament there is no description made of such an Officer to be at any time in the Church, except it be in the Prophecy of the *Apocalypse*, or in one of *St. Paul's* Epistles, where he says, *Who is it that shall sit in the Temple of God, shewing himself that he is God.* Christ tells us *his Kingdom is not of this World*, and if any will be the greatest amongst his Disciples, that he must be Servant to the rest; which shews, that his Followers were to be great in Sanctity, and Humility, and not in Worldly Power. The Apostle *Paul*, writing to the Christians of those times, almost in every Epistle, commands them to be obedient to the *Higher Powers*, or Magistrates, set over them; and *St. Peter* himself (from whom this extravagant Empire is pretended to be deriv'd) in his first Epistle, bids us submit our selves to every Ordinance of Man, for the Lord's sake, whether it be to the King, or, &c. And this is enjoyn'd, although it

is plain, that they who Govern'd the World in those days, were both Heathens, Tyrants, and Usurpers, and in this submission there is no Exception, or Proviso for Ecclesiastical immunity. The Practice as well as Precepts of these Holy Men shews plainly that they had no intention to leave Successors who should deprive Hereditary Princes from their right of Reigning for difference in Religion, who without all doubt, are by the appointment of the Apostle, and by the Principles of Christianity, to be obeyed and submitted to (in things wherein the Fundamental Laws of the Government give them power) though they were *Jews*, or *Gentiles*. If I should tell you by what Texts in Scripture, the Popes claim the Powers before mentioned, it would stir up your laughter, and prove too light for so serious a matter, yet because possibly you may never have heard so much of this Subject before, I shall instance in a few: They tell you therefore that the Jurisdiction they pretend over the Church, and the Power of pardoning Sins, comes from Christ to St. *Peter*, and from him to them. *Thou art Peter, and upon this Rock I will build my Church. I will give thee the Keys of the Kingdom of Heaven; what ye bind* (this is spoken to all the Apostles) *on Earth, shall be bound in Heaven, and what ye bind, &c.* From these three Texts, ridiculously apply'd, comes this great Tree, which hath with its Branches overspread the whole Earth, and killed all the good and wholesome Plants growing upon it. The first Text will never by any Man of Sense be understood to say more, than that the Preaching, Suffering, and Ministry of *Peter* was like to be a great Foundation and Pillar of the Doctrine of Christ; the two other Texts, (as also another spoken by our Saviour, to all his Apostles, *Whose Sins ye remit, they are remitted, and whose Sins ye retain, they are retained*) are by all the Primitive Fathers Interpreted in this manner: Wheresoever you shall effectually Preach the Gospel, you shall carry with you Grace, and Remission of Sins to them which shall follow your Instructions; but the People who



who shall not have these joyful tidings communicated by you to them, shall remain in darkness, and in their Sins; but if any will contest, that by some of these last Texts, that Evangelical Excommunication, which was afterward brought into the Church by the Apostles, was here pre-signified by our great Master; how unlike were those Censures to those now thunder'd out (as he calls it) by the Pope? These were for Edification, and not Destruction, to afflict the Flesh for the Salvation of the Soul; that Apostolical Ordinance was pronounced for some notorious Scandal, or Apostacy from the Faith, and first decreed by the Church; that is, the whole Congregation present; and then denounced by the Pastor, and reached only to debar such Person from partaking of the Communion, or Fellowship of that Church, till Repentance should re-admit him, but was followed by no other prosecution, or chastisement, as is now Practised. But suppose all these Texts had been as they would have them, how does this make for the Successors of *St. Peter*, or the rest? Or how can this prove the Bishops of *Rome* to have right to such Succession? But I make haste from this Subject, and shall urge but one Text more, which is, *The Spiritual Man judgeth all Men, but is himself judged of none*: From whence is inferred by the Canonists, that first the Pope is the Spiritual Man, and then that he is to be Judge of all the World; and last, that he is never to be liable to any Judgment himself; whereas it is obvious to the meanest Understanding, that *St. Paul* in this Text means to distinguish between a Person inspired with the Spirit of God, and one remaining in the state of Nature; which latter he says cannot judge of those Heavenly Gifts, and Graces, as he explains himself, when he says, *The natural Man cannot discern the things of the Spirit, because they are foolishness unto him*. To take my leave of this matter, wholly out of the way of my Studies, I shall beg of you *Messieur Zenobio*, and of *Messieur Giulio*, and the rest of our Society, to read over carefully the New Testament, and then to see what ground there

there is for Purgatory (by which all the Wealth and Greatness hath accrew'd to these Men) what colour for the Idolatrous Worship of Saints, and their Images, and particularly for speaking in their Hymns and Prayers to a piece of Wood (the Cross I mean) *Salve Lignum*, &c. and then *fac nos dignos beneficiorum Christi*, as you may read in that Office; what colour, or rather what excuse for that horrid unchristian and barbarous Engine called the Inquisition, brought in by the Command and Authority of the Pope; the Inventer of which, *Peter* a Dominican Fryer, having been slain amongst the *Albigesi*, as he well deserved, is now Canoniz'd for a Saint, and stiled *San Pietro Martire*. In the dreadful Prisons of this Inquisition, many Faithful and Pious Christians (to say nothing of honest Moral *Moors*, or *Mahometans*) are tormented, and famisht, or if they out-live their Sufferings, burnt publickly to death, and that only for differing in Religion from the Pope, without having any Crime, or the least Misdemeanor prov'd or alledged against them; and this is inflicted upon these poor Creatures, by those who profess to believe the Scripture, which tells us, *that Faith is the gift of God, without whose special illumination no Man can obtain it*; and therefore is not in Reason or Humanity to be punished for wanting it. And Christ himself hath so clearly decided that point, in bidding us *let the Tares and the Wheat grow together till the Harvest*, that I shall never make any difficulty to call him Antichrist, who shall use the least Persecution whatsoever, against any differing in Matters of Faith from himself, whether the person so dissenting be *Heretick*, *Jew*, *Gentile*, or *Mahometan*. Next, I beseech you to observe in reading that Holy Book (though Christian Fasts are doubtless of Divine Right) what ground there is for enjoyning Fish to be eaten (at least Flesh to be abstained from) for one full third part of the year, by which they put the Poor to great hardship; who not having Purves to buy wholesome Fish, are subjected to all the Miseries and Diseases incident to a bad and  
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unhealthful Diet; whilst the Rich, and chiefly themselves, and their Cardinals, exceed *Lucullus* in their Luxury of Oysters, Turbots, tender Crabs, and a Lake Fish not known here, brought some hundreds of miles to feed their gluttony, upon these penitential days of abstinence from Beef and Pork. It may be it will lie in the way of those who observe this, to inquire what *St. Paul* means, when he says, *that in the latter days some shall depart from the Faith, forbidding to Marry, and commanding to abstain from Meats, which God hath Created to be received with thanksgiving*: But all these things, and many other abuses brought in by these perverters of Christianity, will I hope e're long be inquired into by some of the Disciples of that bold Fryer, who the very same year in which I prophesied that the Scourge of the Church was not far off, began to thunder against their Indulgences, and since hath question'd many Tenents long received and impos'd upon the World. I shall conclude this Discourse, after I have said a word of the most hellish of all the Innovations brought in by the Popes, which is the Clergy; these are a sort of Men, under pretence of ministring to the People in Holy things, set apart, and separated from the rest of Mankind (from whom they have a very distinct, and a very opposite interest) by a Humane Ceremony call'd by a Divine Name, *viz.* Ordination; these, wherever they are found (with the whole body of the Monks, and Fryers, who are called the Regular Clergy) make a Band which may be called the *Janizaries* of the Papacy; these have been the Causers of all the Solicisms and Immoralities in Government, and of all the Impieties and Abominations in Religion, and by consequence of all the Disorder, Villany, and Corruption we suffer under in this detestable Age. These Men, by the help of the Bishop of *Rome*, have crept into all the Governments in *Christendom*, where there is any mixture of Monarchy, and made themselves a third State; that is, have by their Temporalities (which are almost a third part of all the Lands in *Europe*, given them  
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by the blind Zeal, or rather folly of the Northern People, who over-ran this part of the World) stept into the Throne, and what they cannot perform by these Secular Helps, and by the dependency their Vassals have upon them, they fail not to claim and to usurp by the Power they pretend to have from God, and his Vicegerent at *Rome*. They exempt themselves, their Lands, and Goods from all Secular Jurisdiction, that is, from all Courts of Justice, and Magistracy, and will be Judges in their own Cause, as in matters of Tithes, &c. and not content with this, will appoint Courts of their own, to decide Sovereignly in Testamentary Matters, and many other Causes, and take upon them to be the sole Punishers of many great Crimes, as Witchcraft, Sorcery, Adultery, and all Uncleannesse: To say nothing of the fore-mentioned Judicatory of the Inquisition, in these last Cases they turn the Offenders over to be punisht (when they have given Sentence) by the *Secular Arm*, so they call the Magistrate, who is blindly to execute their Decrees, under pain of Hell fire; as if Christian Princes and Governours were appointed only by God to be their Braves, or Hangmen. They give Protection and Sanctuary to all Execrable Offenders, even to Murderers themselves (whom God commanded to be indispensably punisht with death) if they come within their Churches, Cloysters, or any other place which they will please to call Holy Ground; and if the ordinary Justice, nay, the Sovereign Power, do proceed against such Offender, they thunder out their Excommunication, that is, cut off from the Body of Christ, not the Prince only, but the whole Nation, and People; shutting the Church doors, and commanding Divine Offices to cease, and sometimes even authorizing the People to rise up in Arms, and constrain their Governours to a submission; as happen'd to this poor City, in the time of our Ancestors; when for but forbidding the Servant of a poor Carmilite Fryer (who had vowed Poverty, and should have kept none) to go armed, and punishing his disobedience with

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Imprisonment, our whole Senate, with their Chief Magistrate, were constrained to go to *Avignon* for Absolution; and in case of refusal, had been Massacred by the People. It would almost astonish a Wise Man to imagine how these Folks should acquire an Empire so destructive to Christian Religion, and so pernicious to the Interests of Men; but it will not seem so miraculous to them who shall seriously consider, that the Clergy hath been for more than these Thousand Years upon the catch, and a form'd united Corporation against the purity of Religion, and the Interests of Mankind; and have not only wrested the Holy Scriptures to their own advantage (which they have kept from the Laiety in unknown Languages, and by prohibiting the reading thereof) but made use likewise, first, of the blind Devotion and Ignorance of the *Goths*, *Vandals*, *Huns*, &c. and since, of the Ambition and Avarice of Christian Princes, stirring them up one against another, and sending them upon foolish Errands to the Holy Land, to lose their Lives, and to leave their Dominions in the mean time exposed to themselves, and their Complices; they have besides kept Learning and Knowledge amongst themselves, stifling the light of the Gospel; crying down Moral Vertues as splendid Snares, defacing Humane Policy, destroying the purity of the Christian Faith and Profession, and all that was Vertuous, Prudent, Regular, and Orderly upon Earth; so that whoever would do God, and Good Men service, get himself immortal Honour in this Life, and Eternal Glory in the next, would restore the good Policy (I had almost said, with my Author *Livy*, the Sanctity too) of the *Heathens*, with all their Valour, and other Glorious Endowments: I say, whoever would do this, must make himself powerful enough to extirpate this Cursed and Apostate Race out of the World; and that you

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may

may see this is lawful, as well as necessary, I shall say but one word of their Calling, and Original, and then leave this Subject. The word Clergy is a term wholly unknown to the Scriptures, otherwise than in this sense. A peculiar People, or God's Lott, used often for the whole *Jewish* Nation, who are likewise called a Kingdom of Priests in some places. In the New Testament the word *Cleros* is taken for the true Believers, who are also called the Elect, and often the Church, which is the Assembly of the Faithful met together; as is easily seen, by reading the beginning of most of St. *Paul's* Epistles; where, writing to the Church, or *Gala-thian* Churches, he usually explains himself to all the Saints in Christ; sometimes to all who have obtained like Faith with us; sometimes to all who in all places call upon the Name of the Lord Jesus, &c. By which, it appears, that neither the word Church, nor Clergy, was in those days ever appropriated to the Pastors, or Elders of the Flock, but did signify indifferently all the People assembled together; which is likewise the literal construction of the word *Ecclesia*, which is an Assembly, or Meeting: In these Congregations or Churches, was performed their Ordination, which properly signifies no more than a Decree of such Assembly, but is particularly used for an Election of any into the Ministry. The manner was this, sometimes the Apostles themselves in their Perigrinations, and sometimes any other eminent Member of the Church, did propose to the Society (upon Vacancy, or other necessity of a Pastor, Elder, or Deacon) some good Holy Man to be Elected; which Person, if he had Parts, or Gifts, such as the Church could Edify by, was chosen by lifting up of hands, that is, by Suffrage; and oftentimes hands were laid upon him, and Prayer made for him. These Men so set apart, did not pretend to any Consecration



secration, or Sacredness, more than they had before; much less to become a distinct thing from the rest of Mankind; as if they had been Metamorphos'd, but did attend to perform the several Functions of their Calling, as Prophe-  
 sying, that is, preaching the Gospel, Visiting the Sick, &c. and never intermitted the ordinary business of their Trade, or Profession, unless their Church or Congregation was very numerous; in which case, they were maintain'd by Alms, or Contribution, which was laid aside by every Member, and Collected the first day of the Week by the Deacons; this was said to be given to the Church, and was employ'd by Suffrage of the whole collective Body to the Poor, and to other incidences; so far was it from Sa-  
 crilege in those days, to employ Church Goods to Lay uses. From these words, Church, Clergy, Ordination, Pas-  
 tor, (which last hath been Translated of late years Bishop) you see what Conclusions these Men have deduced, and how immense a Structure they have rais'd upon so little a Foundation, and how easily it will fall to the ground, when God shall inspire Christian Princes and States to re-  
 deem his Truths, and his poor enslaved Members out of their clutches, and to bring back again into the World, the true Original Christian Faith, with the Apostolical Churches, Pastors, and Ordination, so consistent with Mo-  
 ral Vertue, and Integrity; so helpful and conducing to the best and most prudent Policy, so fitted for obedience to Magistracy, and Government, all which the World hath for many years been depriv'd of, by the execrable and innate ill quality, which is inseparable from Priestcraft, and the Conjuraton or Spell of their new invented Ordination, by which they cry with the Poet *Claudian*,

*Jam furor humanum nostro de pectore sensum,  
Expulit & totum spirant præcordia Phæbum.*

Which makes them so Sacred, and Holy, that they have nothing of Integrity, or, indeed, of Humanity left in them. I hope I shall not be thought impious any longer, upon this Point; I mean for Vindicating Christian Religion from the assaults of these Men, who, having the confidence to believe, or at least profess themselves the only Instruments which God hath chosen, or can chuse, to teach and reform the World (though they have neither Moral Vertues, nor Natural Parts, equal to other Men for the most part) have by this pretence prevailed so far upon the common sort of People, and upon some too of a better quality, that they are perswaded their Salvation, or Eternal Damnation, depends upon believing, or not believing of what they say. I would not be understood to dissuade any from honouring the true Apostolical Teachers, when they shall be re-established amongst us, or from allowing them (even of right, and not of alms or courtesie) such Emoluments as may enable them cheerfully to perform the duties of their Charge, to provide for their Children, and even to use Hospitality, as they are commanded by St. Paul. But this I will Prophecie before I conclude, that if Princes shall perform this business by halves, and leave any root of this Clergy, or Priest-craft, as it now is, in the ground; or if that Famous Reformer, fled some years since out of *Picardy*, to *Geneva*, who is of so great Renown for Learning, and Parts, and who promises us so perfect a Reformation, shall not in his Model wholly extirpate this sort of Men; then I say I must foretell, that as well the Magistrate, as this Workman, will find themselves deceived



deceived in their expectation, and that the least Fibra of this Plant will overrun again the whole Vineyard of the Lord, and turn to a diffusive Papacy in every Diocess, perhaps in every Parish. So that God in his mercy inspire them to cut out the Core of the Ulcer, and the bag of this Impostume, that it may never ranckle, or fester any more, nor break out hereafter, to diffuse new corruption and putrefaction through the Body of Christ, which is his Holy Church, nor to vitiate and infect the good Order, and true Policy of Government. I come now to the last branch of my Charge, which is, That I teach Princes Villany, and how to Enslave and Oppress their Subjects: In which Accusation I am dealt with as poor Messieur *Agnolo Canini* was, who, as they report, being a very Learned Practiser of the Laws, and left the only Man of this profession, one Autumn in our City, the rest of the Advocates being fled into the Country for fear of a Contagious Disease which then reigned, was commanded by our Judges to assist with his Counsel both Parties, and to draw Pleas as well for the Defendant, as the Plaintiff, else the Courts of Justice must have been shut up. In the same manner my Accusers handle me, and make me first exhort and teach Subjects to throw off their Princes, and then to instruct Monarchs how to Enslave and Oppress them; but I did not expect such ingratitude from mine own Citizens; or to be serv'd as *Moses* was, when he was upbraided for killing the *Egyptian*, by one of his own People, for whose sake he had done it; whereas he believed they would have understood by that action, that he was the Person whom God intended to make use of in delivering them from the horrid Slavery they were then under. If any Man will read over my Book of the *Prince* with impartiality, and ordinary

nary Charity, he will easily perceive that it is not my intention therein to recommend that Government, or those Men there described, to the World; much less to teach them to trample upon good Men, and all that is Sacred and Venerable upon Earth; Laws, Religion, Honesty, and what not.

If I have been a little too punctual in designing these Monsters, and drawn them to the Life in all their Lineaments, and Colours, I hope Mankind will know them, the better to avoid them; my Treatise being both a Satyr against them, and a true Character of them. I speak nothing of Great and Honourable Princes, as the Kings of *France, England*, and others, who have the States and Orders of their Kingdoms, with excellent Laws and Constitutions, to found and maintain their Government; and who reign over the Hearts, as well as the Persons of their Subjects. I treat only of those Vermine, bred out of the corruption of our own small Commonwealth, and Cities, or engender'd by the ill blasts that come from *Rome*, as *Olivarolo da Fermo, Borgia*, the *Baglioni*, the *Bentivogli*, and a hundred others, who having had neither right, nor honourable means to bring them to their power, use it with more Violence, Rapine and Cruelty upon the poor People, than those other Renowned Princes shew to the Boars, the Wolves, the Foxes, and other Savage Beasts, which are the Objects of their Chace and Hunting. Whosoever in his Empire over Men is ty'd to no other Rules than those of his own Will and Lust, must either be a Saint to moderate his Passions, or else a very Devil incarnate; or if he be neither of these, both his Life and Reign are like to be very short; for whosoever takes upon him so execrable an Employment, as to Rule Men against the Laws of Nature, and of Reason, must turn all topsy turvy, and  
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never stick at any thing ; for if once he halt, he will fall, and never rise again. I hope after this I need say little to justify my self from the Calumny of advising these Monsters to break their Faith, since to keep it, is to lose their Empire; Faithfulness and Sincerity being their mortal Enemies: And *Uguccione della Faggrivola*, to one who upbraided him, that he never employ'd honest Men, answered, honest Men will cut my throat; let the King use honest Men, meaning the King of *Naples*, who was Established in this Throne, and had right to it. But that I may have occasion to justify my self against a little more than I am accused of : I will confess, that in a Work, where I desired to be a little more serious than I was in this Book of the Prince, I did affirm, that in what way soever Men defended their Country, whether by breaking or keeping their Faith, it was ever well defended ; not meaning in a strict moral fence, or point of Honour ; but explaining my self, that, *de facto*, the infamy of the breach of word would quickly be forgotten, and pardon'd by the World, which is very true; nay, what if I had said that good success in any Enterprize (a far less consideration than Piety to our Country) would have cancel'd the blame of such a perfidy ?

I might have alledged a thousand Examples for the truth of this ; to take one for all, we see the treachery which *Cæsar* (whom I compare to *Cataline*) used toward his fellow Citizens; not only not detested by Posterity, but even crowned with Renown, and immortal Fame, insomuch as Princes to this day (as I have observed elsewhere) think it an honour to be compared to him, and the highest pitch of Veneration their Flatterers can arrive to, is to call them by the name of one who violated his Faith, and Enslav'd his Country.

I hope that in shewing as well these Tyrants, as the poor People who are forced to live under them, their danger; that is, by laying before the former, the hellish and precipitous Courses, they must use to maintain their Power; and by representing to the latter what they must suffer, I may be Instrumental, first, to deter private Citizens from attempting upon the Liberties of their Country, or if they have done it, to make them lay down their ill-gotten Authority, and then to warn the rest of the Nobility and People from those Factions and Malignancies in their several Commonwealths and Governments, which might give hope and opportunity to those who are Ambitious amongst them, to aspire to an Empire over them. However it prove, I hope I am no more to be blamed for my attempt, than that Excellent Physician of our Nation is, who hath lately taken so much pains to compose an excellent Treatise of that foul Disease, which was not long since brought from the New World, into these parts; wherein, though he be forced to use such expressions as are almost able to nauseate his Readers, and talk of such Ulcers, Boils, Nodes, Botches, Cankers, &c. that are scarce fit to be repeated; especially when he handles the Causes of those Effects; yet he did not intend to teach or exhort Men to get this Disease, much less did he bring this lamentable infirmity into the World; but describes it faithfully as it is, to the end Men may be deterr'd, and avoid the being infected with it, and may discern and Cure it, when ever their incontinence and folly shall procure it them. I shall say no more in this matter, but, to conclude all, make a protestation, that as well in this Book, as in all my other Writings, my only scope and design is to promote the interest and welfare of Mankind, and the peace and quiet of the World; both which

I am so vain as to believe, would be better obtained, and provided for, if the Principles I lay down were followed, and observed, by Princes and People, than they are like to be by those Maxims which are in this Age most in vogue.

For my self, I shall only say, (and call you all to Witness for the Truth of it) that as by my Birth I am a Gentleman, and of a Family which hath had many Chief Magistrates of Justice in it; so I have been used in many Employments of Great Trust, both in our City and Abroad, and at this Hour, I am am not in my Estate one Penny the better for them all nor should I have been, although I had never suffered any Losses by the Seizure of my Estate, in the Year 1531. For my Carriage, it hath ever been void of Faction and Contention; I never had any Prejudice against the House of *Medici*, but Honoured the Persons of all those of that Family, whom I knew, and the Memory of such of them as Liv'd before me, whom I acknowledge to have been Excellent Patriots and Pillars of our City and Commonwealth: During the turbulent times of *Piero*, and after his Expulsion out of *Florence*; though my Employments were but Ministerial, my Advice was ask'd in many Grave Matters, which I ever delivered with Impartiality and Indifference; not espousing the Heady Opinions of any, much less their Passions and Animosities, I never sided with any Party further than that the Duty of my Charge oblig'd me to serve the prevailing Party, when posselt of the Government of our City; this I speak for those Changes which happen'd between the Flight of the said *Piero de Medici*, and the Horrid Parricide, committed by *Clement* the 7th upon his Indulgent Mother, joyning with his greatest Enemies, and uniting himself with those who had used the most Transcendent Insolence to his own Person, and the highest Violence

lence and Fury the Sun ever saw, to his poor Courtiers and Subjects; that so accompany'd, he might Sheath his Sword in the Bowels of his own Desolate Country. At that time, and during that whole Siege, I must confess, I did break the Confines of my Neutrality, and not only Acted as I was commanded barely, but rous'd my self, and stirr'd up others, Haranguing (in the streets and places of the City) the People to defend, with the last drop of their Blood, the Walls of their Country, and the Liberty of their Government, taking very hazardous Journeys to *Ferruccio*, and the rest, into the *Mugello* and other parts, to bring in Succours and Provisions to our languishing City; and Acting as a Soldier (which was a new Profession to me) at the Age of above Sixty, when others are Dispenced from it. For all which I had so intire a Satisfaction in my Mind and Conscience, that I am perswaded this Cordial made me able to support the Sufferings which befell me after our Catastrophe, and to rejoyce in them so far, that all the Malice and Cruelty of our Enemies, could never draw one word from me unsuitable to the Honour I thought I merited, and did in some sort enjoy, for being instrumental to defend (as long as it was possible) our Altars and our Hearths. But all that I have undergone, hath been abundantly Recompenced to me, by the Favour and Courtesie of the Most Excellent *Seigneur Cosimo*, who hath been pleas'd to offer me all the Preferments the greatest Ambition could aspire to; which I did not refuse, out of any scruple to serve so incomparable a Prince, whose Early Years manifest so much Courage, Humanity, and Prudence, and so Fatherly a care of the Publick Good, but because I was very desirous not to accept of a Charge which I was not able to perform, my Years and Infirmities having now brought me to a Condition, in which I am fitter to live in a Cloyster than



than a Palace; and made me good for nothing but to talk of past times, the common Vice of Old Age; so that I did not think it Just or Grateful, to Reward this Excellent Person so ill for his Kindness, as to give him an useles Servant, and to fill up the place of a far better. This is all I think fit to say of this matter: I chuse to address it to you *Messieur Zenobio*, for the constant Friendship I have ever Entertain'd with you, and formerly with your Deceased Father, the Companion of my Studies, and Ornament of our City. And so I bid you Farewell.

This 1st of *April*  
1537.

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